**AB 617 Community Air Protection Program**

**Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting**

**ECRMC Community Education Center**

**El Centro, California**

**February 13th, 2019**

**Co-chairs: Luis Olmedo; Matt Dessert**

**Facilitator: Scott Weaver of Ramboll**

1. **Attendance**

**Mireya Diaz,** El Centro Corridor; **Diahna Garcia-Ruiz,** Heber Corridor; **Mary Salazar,** Calexico Corridor; **Kristian Salgado,** Calexico resident; **Jose Celaya,** Heber resident; **Rosa Guerrero,** alternate for **Mersedes Martínez,** Calexico Corridor; **Paul Monarrez,** alternate e for **John Hernandez, Sergio Cabañas,** Heber/El Centro Corridor; **Blake Plourd,** Heber/El Centro Corridor; **Aide Fulton-Munguia,** El Centro Corridor; **Luis Olmedo,** Comité Civico del Valle; **Matt Dessert,** Air Pollution Control District; **Dora Alvarez**; Community Corridor.

**Alternate**: Humberto Lugo; Mersedes Martinez; Ivette Herrera; Bob Fischer; Sandra Mendivil; Diego Gamboa;

1. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

**Matt Dessert** welcomed everyone and mentioned that taking into consideration comments from the prior meeting, they were working on having a designated area for anyone who is handicapped, they added a speaker in order to have a better audio, and a larger screen for a better view.

**Luis Olmedo** said he was very enthusiastic about the last meeting and that he was looking forward to moving forward through the agenda.

1. **Public Comment Period**

There were no comments at this time.

1. **Action Items**

**Discussion and Adoption of CSC Charter**

**Matt Dessert** mentioned they had shared the last version of the Charter at the last committee meeting and that they were looking forward to a motion and a second in order to take action on adopting these bylaws after listening to any comments or suggestions regarding this document.

**Blake Plourd** asked if the Board of the County Air Pollution Control District was the same as the board of supervisors or if that was a different board.

**Matt Dessert** explained that in the Imperial County the Board of Supervisors also functions and acts as the Air Pollution Control Board and they have the final say so and are the final approving body for activities. Therefore, the County Board of Supervisors is the same Air Pollution Control Board in this document.

**Kristian Salgado** asked if they could change it to the Board of Supervisors because she finds that to be confusing.

**Matt Dessert** explained that the Board of Supervisors acting as the Air Pollution Control Board are the ones that are recognized by the California Air Resources Board so he explained they need to maintain that Air Pollution Control Board, but that perhaps they could better define it with a bracket stating *the County Air Pollution Control Board, also known as the Board of Supervisors.* He asked **Belen Leon** to make a note of this as they might be taking action on an amendment of the document once there is a motion and a second, and then it is voted on.

**Kristian Salgado** said she believes the use of the term *program* refers to the community air emissions reduction program, but then there is also a description of another use of the term *program.* She said she found that to be confusing.

**An Attendee** said in response to the prior comment, that you could clarify the use of the word *program* by using the initials CAEM for Community Air Emissions Monitoring in front of the word *program.*

**Kristian Salgado** mentioned that on the document there are two different programs mentioned, one being the Community Air Emissions Monitoring Program, and a second one being the Community Air Emissions Reduction Program.

**Matt Dessert** explained that both activities are being taken on by this AB 617 committee. He also said that after discussing it with **Mr. Olmedo,** they had come to the conclusion that perhaps they would be better off calling it the *617 program* or the *617 programs* with a bracket around the *s* so it would mean an individual program or multiple programs.

**Sergio Cabañas** said he would like to make a motion for the approval of the CSC Charter with the necessary amendments.

**Andrea Juarez** from CARB, explained that there are two components of AB 617 for Imperial County. There is the Community Emissions Reduction Program and the Community Air Monitoring Plan. She said perhaps that is where the confusion lies; one is called a plan, and the other one a program. However, she said that both pieces are part of the AB 617 Program so whenever the Ab 617 Program is mentioned, it would be referring to both.

**Matt Dessert** stated they were looking for a motion with three amendments; one specifically identifying the District Board with a *Board of Supervisors bracket;* and two, on the third sentence in the second paragraph, adding the Air Emission Reduction and Monitoring Program**s** in plural; and three changing the use of program throughout the document to *617 Program.*

**Sergio Cabañas** stated that was his motion once more to approve the CSC Charter with those amendments at that time.

**Mireya Diaz** seconded the motion.

**Matt Dessert** called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

**Committee to Vote on Changing March 13th, 2019 CSC meeting to March 14th, 2019**

**Aide Fulton** made a motion to change the date.

**Blake Plourd** seconded the motion.

**Scott Weaver** called for a vote on the motion, and it passed unanimously.

1. **Information**

**Survey Results from the January 30th, 2019 Breakout Sessions; CCV**

**Matt Dessert** mentioned that this was done by a unique piece of technology through which in real time, they were able to use their smart phones and do a survey in the room.

**Miguel** from CCV presented a handout with the results from the survey.

**Ray Askins** suggested that just as San Diego has done; it would be a good idea to require two members from the Board of Supervisors to attend their meetings.

**Matt Dessert** stated that they are engaging and inviting the Board of Supervisors as well as many community members to participate and attend the meetings. However, he mentioned that he did not know if it would be a little bit over reaching to make it a requirement.

**Ray Askins** also suggested having more key people from Mexicali attend these meetings since Mexicali plays a major role as to what happens in the air quality within this corridor.

**Matt Dessert** agreed with Ray Askins and said they should indeed be inviting those members of the public, education, and private sector from Mexicali to attend these meetings. He also mentioned that there are other types of meetings that are taking place periodically called PM 2.5 Workshops, which specifically focus on the border and Mexicali. He also said that at those meetings, they are extending an invitation to participate at these AB 617 meetings, and that they would also be notifying everyone on this group as to when those workshops take place so they can have a nice crossover of participation.

**Ray Kellner** asked what measure progress of ignition control refers to. He asked if this meant that in the future businesses within the corridor would be mandated to implement abatement controls and if so, how would they pay for them being privately owned businesses.

**An Attendee** responded that would come down to the emission reduction strategies that the CSC comes up with, but that mandatory abatement controls for businesses is a possibility.

**Ray Askins** suggested including the specific city of the corridor each member and alternate represents on the list of participants.

**Follow Up Survey Questions on Elements 1 – 5**

Members and alternates of the committee were asked to scan the QR code on their agendas in order to participate on this survey and the poll was taken.

**Kristian Salgado** asked if they would have an opportunity to comment on the questions and their possible answers.

**A member from CCV** said they would have the opportunity to do that when they share and review the results at their next meeting.

**Matt Dessert** informed they had one vacant seat opening as an alternate seat at the Steering Committee. He also mentioned that after being reviewed by CCV and APCD**, Irene S. Garcia** will be filling that seat for **Mary Salazar.**

**An Attendee** mentioned she thought it was a great idea to constantly do surveys. However, she said that if this continues to be done it might be helpful not to see survey responses while they are being done as this may incline you to change your answers as you are responding the survey.

1. **Presentations / Questions and Answers**

**Control Strategies on Community Emissions Reduction Plan; Emily, Ramboll**

**Ray Askins** said it would be helpful to know what this group is going to be confronted with in terms of enforcement that is available in Mexicali and compared to what is going on here in the Imperial County. He added that if they could understand that effectively, then they would know what to do to circumvent the problem. He also asked if they had a list of abatement equipment available and where it would be used.

**Luis Olmedo** said they are still in the process of figuring the program for implementation on the US side of the border for the communities that had been selected. He also said he would like to invite the Committee and the public to think about it because this conversation is already happening. He added that Mexicali has an opportunity to replicate this program and learn from what we are doing here. He concluded saying he was not really sure how that would evolve, but he would say that they should bring Mexicali into the conversation.

**Emily** added that enforcement is a big piece of the emission reduction program and that CARB requires the District to do a three year retroactive review of their enforcement activities. She also said that all of that information would be available to this committee in order to try to understand what it means, where there is room for improvement as well as next steps to take.

**Ray Kellner** said there were not only Air Pollution Control District inspections, but that if you mandate abatement equipment; people who are forced to buy this will also be forced to buy permits as well and pay annual fees to the Air Pollution Control District. Therefore, he asked if they had a plan to help them pay for these fees and inspections as the businesses along the corridor re not big corporations and might be put out of business, which would not be good for the community.

**Emily** said that is yet to be defined amongst this committee, and as always there should be a balance between air quality and public health, and obviously looking to have jobs and a healthy economy within the corridor.

**Tracy Rascoe** said with the homelessness issues that they have across the counties; they might have a seasonal impact on air quality due to burning of different materials because these people need to stay warm. He said he was bringing this up as something to also consider.

**An Attendee** said she’d like to see a consideration of recommendations related to zoning and planning at both the city and the county level because she thinks a lot of the problems with public health and air quality are related to inappropriate or poor zoning and planning decisions.

**Emily** mentioned that appendix C talks about land use planning as a potential strategy. She also mentioned that if this is something this committee as well as the public at large is interested in pursuing, she is sure that the District and CCV would gladly get you more information on that.

**First 5 Elements of the Community Monitoring Plan; Emily, Ramboll**

**Luis Olmedo** pointed out that the projects and the partnerships that have happened through this program have been very influential on other communities that are just now getting these programs going, and that they have been the example in this Valley.

**Matt Dessert** reminded everyone that this is first draft, which will help them understand their roles and objectives as well as how they can logically make some types of improvements. He also mentioned that there are significant moneys that are focused in this area for the incentive projects.

**Kristian Salgado** asked how the Community Monitoring Plan connects with the Community Emission Reduction Program. She asked if the monitoring would dictate the direction of the emission reduction strategies.

**Emily** said that indeed that is how that is going to work, but she also added that they would use the data from the IVAN Network as well as the regulatory data to get started on emission reduction strategies.

**Kristian Salgado** suggested having a presentation on what they are observing from the regulatory monitors.

**Emily** explained that the specific pollutants that this corridor is in nonattainment for are PM 2.5, PM 10, and ozone. She also added that they have identified that they have significant PM 2.5, and ozone transport from Mexicali, Mexico due to the meteorology, and that the PM 10 issue has to do with high wind dust events. She finished saying that CARB is working on an emission inventory specific to the corridor and the results would be presented to this committee when they are ready.

**APCD Agricultural Burn Policy #34 Review; Emanuel Sanchez, CCV**

**Edie Harmon** said she was amazed at how drastically and suddenly the wind direction can change near the mountains, and asked if something like that happens in the valley and if so, if this changes whether or not they are allow agricultural burning in the region when the conditions suddenly change.

**Emmanuel Sanchez** said that is something they always take into consideration. He explained their inspectors are always out and about and they notify their supervisors of any sudden wind changes they notice and make adjustments accordingly by calling the farmers and letting them know they cannot longer burn due to these changes even though they might have already be given permission. He added they do this not only for agricultural, but also for open residential burning.

**An Attendee** asked what the time line for implementing the new policy on agricultural and open residential burning will be.

**Emmanuel Sanchez** said that in terms of time lines, they are taking into consideration comments from the PM 2.5 workshop group as well as this committee to decide when this policy will be adopted.

**An Attendee** asked if there will be adequate staff and resources to handle that change.

**Emmanuel Sanchez** said this is a key point because they only have 4 inspectors currently and they will probably need further staff in the enforcement division once this policy is implemented.

**Matt Dessert** added that a lot of these comments and concerns about the agricultural burning have been coming at the District for quite some time as well as to the Board of Supervisors. He said they have had complaints on file and record, and have held meetings with the California Air Resources Board and some of the agricultural sector people in order to safely manage this activity maintaining stability in the future.

**Emmanuel Sanchez** mentioned that they had been working very hard with CARB in the past few months to ensure that they have the best available data in order to be able to make the smartest decisions in terms of burning.

**Luis Olmedo** mentioned that sometimes people are not aware of the proper ways to burn efficiently and that the fire can go on for many hours.

**Emmanuel Sanchez** said that when a burning permission is required and issued, the assistance office indicates the farmer that by regulation, the fire has to be out by sunset.

**Matt Dessert** mentioned that the majority of the complaints they receive are residential burning, and he said he thought it was important for the agricultural community to be aware of this so that they are not blamed for something they are not doing.

1. **Agenda Topics For Next Meeting / Time of Meeting**

**Matt Dessert** mentioned they had the next meeting scheduled for March 14th. He also mentioned that establishing a technical advisory committee had been discussed between himself and **Mr. Olmedo** in order to approach larger subjects such as budget, the monitoring area, planning, and emission reduction projects. He said that through this committee they can put together a framework of discussion that can handle those needed activities in a faster manner.

1. **Closing Remarks / Adjournment**

**Matt Dessert** thanked everybody for their attendance and said he was looking for a motion to close the meeting

**Kristian Salgado** made a motion to close the meeting.

**Aide Fulton** seconded the motion, and the committee voted to approve the motion.

**Meeting adjourned.**